

2: Ling & Ruey

AE 5 Miao AE5

● 535

/For detailed information on the various types of Miao drumstick and fist dances, see category 116, pp. 310-350./

/94 cont./

836 carry wine and food up the mountain, singing and dancing re-
 517 ciprocally. Those who became fond of each other would drink
 [533] from an ox horn. There is the custom among the Miao of
 [535] dancing for the new year, dancing for the moon, and singing
 for autumn. On such occasions, young men and women form
 groups and sing in response to each other all night until daybreak.
 After singing they mix with each other, drinking and joking,
 even to the extent of having sexual relations. This is called
fang yeh "going wild."

582 Although unmarried men and women are free to fall in love,
 [584] marriage, however, requires parental consent as well as the ap-
 proval of the maternal uncle of the girl. The He Miao of
 Ch'ing Chiang, Kweichow have a marriage custom where they
 betroth the daughter of a paternal aunt to be the daughter-in-
 law of a maternal uncle. Should the maternal uncle have no
 son, the girl's family has to pay a large sum of money to him.
 Without such a payment the girl all her life may not marry.
 The Miao, other than close paternal cousins not being suitable
 mates, they do not object to marriage between people of the
 same surname. However, maternal cousins may not marry.
 582 This is a survival from a matrilineal society, because in a
 611 matrilineal society maternal cousins have the same surname
 whereas cross cousins or male and female first cousins on the
 father's side have different surnames. That maternal cousins
 cannot marry is evidence of their advance from a matrilineal
 society to a patrilineal society. The importance of the maternal
 uncle's position in sacrificial ceremonies as well as in the so-
 ciety is additional evidence.

514 The former marriage customs of the Miao were slightly
 583 different from their present ways. Yung-sui T'ing Chih says:
 "Miao marriage is just like a purchase. They do not follow the
 /Chinese/ custom of asking names (as a preliminary to fixing
 a betrothal) and sending presents to the bride's home to fix
 the betrothal. They only negotiate about the number of horses
 and cattle through a broker. The broker is a Miao marriage
 go-between. It definitely requires five or six horses or heads
 000 of cattle to initiate a trade for one wife. When the agreement

/141 cont. /

*782 also must provide a sharp spear and a large creeper. The spear is used to stab the ox, and the creeper, to tie its head.

/142/ The Bludgeoning the Ox sacrifice to the kuei is the most lavish affair of the Miao. In addition to the water buffalo, the host also has to buy a common ox, two pigs, two chickens, and incense and paper, firecrackers, sweet wine, and sour fish. The relatives all have to send gifts.

[178] Formerly the Miao Bludgeoning-the-Buffalo sacrifice to the kuei lasted for five days, but now it lasts only three days. The first day is to honor the guests. That morning the "leg-bearing" relatives arrive in formation. As they approach the host's

[788] house they set off firecrackers and play music. The host comes out to welcome them by burning incense and paper before them and kowtowing three times. The Miao consider that the water buffalo kuei comes with the mother's brother. By the time the lamps are lit in the evening, most of the guests invited have arrived; and after supper men and women guests begin to sing

[533] songs (see the chapter "Folk Songs," songs Nos. 29 and 30,
[535] "Eating Ox Song," and songs 33, 34, and 35, called "Beating the Flower Drum Song" /not translated/) and dance drum dances. The Chinese call the Miao drum dances "beating monkey drums." (See "Drum Dances and Amusements.") The host first starts the drumming, followed by the "leg-bearing" relatives, then by other guests according to the degree of relationship with the host, and last by the helpers. At the same time the sorcerer-priest begins his performance, using two large tables put together in the main house to make a long table, on which are then spread rice husks, on which are placed wine bowls, meat bowls, an iron tripod holding a tin can, and an upper millstone. The table is surrounded on all four sides with a number of plank benches. The sorcerer-priest and four "leg-bearing" relatives properly dressed in full

[292] dress, and sometimes they wear spirit robes /shen p'ao/. The sorcerer-priest sits in the middle and the four men sit next. Those who blow trumpets and beat drums and gongs sit below. The sorcerer-priest, ringing a hand bell with his right hand and holding a chiao-tzu in his left hand, begins uttering an incantation.

are farmers. In the family in which I lived the oldest man, one nephew, and the son had gone through middle school in Kweiyang. The nephew's eldest son was then in the Lung-li Middle School. Both the old man and the nephew have been the teacher in the local school. The son had considerable business to do for the family. 872
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On three occasions when the moon was full and the night clear — the fifteenth of the Chinese month — children ran and shouted until they were tired out. Once this was at the temple while the Huang and Su families were holding the annual family feast. Twice it was in the village. Like the Chinese, the Miao seemed loathe to go to bed as long as it was light enough out of doors to see, particularly on moonlit nights. One such night someone was practising the *lu sheng* until well into the night, the children were shouting and the young folks laughing and talking. On two other nights when it was very clear and the moon bright, though not full, the young men played the *lu sheng* (fig. 18, a, b) and the girls danced. Lively, fast tunes were played, and all seemed to be enjoying themselves hugely. This took place at the point where the men made a sacrifice and had a feast on San Yüeh San. They told me they would have danced out of doors on the occasion of an old lady's funeral had there been a moon, but it came at the dark of the moon. 857
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Youth. Young people grew up much less hedged about with conventions than were the Chinese of the locality. They worked and played together, as in the cleaning of stables, fishing in the pond, harvesting, and the New Year holiday. At that time girls sat about two fires in the space bounded by the buffalo bullfighting meadow, a bamboo thicket, a cluster of grave mounds, and the highway along the southern edge of the wood. There they embroidered, played the flute, and sang, as they entertained young men from other Cowrie Shell Miao villages. A group of women with their children sat about the third fire, but did not interfere with the teasing, snatching of turbans and ornaments, and chasing which went on. During this period boys from other villages stayed all night in the homes of this village, and a group went to market together. If there was sexual promiscuity at this time, it was not practised openly. [35] •
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[496]

883 It might have been of the sort that existed
836 in An-lung Hsien. There between the time
of her betrothal and her marriage, which were
arranged by the two families, a Miao girl
would, without letting her family know, very
often have relations with a young man of her
own choosing, and bear him a child. I was
told that often a husband would not acknowl-
edge the first child, even if it were a son, and
that when family property was divided this
child would receive no share. The mother,
however, usually managed to get money for
her love child, so that he might not be with-
out inheritance. From the similarity of the
songs sung in the two places, I suspected that
the same thing went on in a Cowrie Shell Miao
village. Here are translations of the two songs.
The one from An-lung was definitely an in-
vitation from a young man for sexual inter-
course. Some girls were more forward and
grasping than others. I noticed that Mo-mei
managed matters so that she and the girls she
favored got most of the attention.

883 THE AN-LUNG MIAO SONG
836 For a long time I have been coming here.
839 The cool water here produces cool melons.
If one opens the melon he may drink cool water.
If you will not be my sweetheart, I shall not come
again.

THE COWRIE SHELL MIAO SONG
On the top of the high mountain is planted a red
flower.
Younger sister (I) cannot hope that older brother
(you) will come.
Older brother (you) has ten years moved the
flower;
In ten places there has been communication, in nine
places complete.
The road is long, the *ma ts'ao* is red.

883 Now and then on clear, moonlit nights the
• 535 young men of the village brought out their
533 *lu sheng* and the girls danced. Otherwise one
heard the *lu sheng* only when they were prac-
tising the rhythm and tunes — usually of an
evening after work — at a bullfight, when the
young people were together in a village after
a bullfight or a wedding, and at a funeral.
Then the dancing, accompanied by drum and
lu sheng, went on from dusk till dawn for as
many as four successive nights.

534 The *lu sheng* was made of wood, and was
also called the *liu sheng* because it had six

[50a]

593 From this time on the life of a Miao bride varied little from that of other Cowrie Shell Miao women. It was not much easier, though a little more full of good things, perhaps, if her husband's family was large and well-to-do and she fitted into it well.

766 **Death and Burial.** When a very small child died, a little coffin was made by the men of the family, but there was no ceremony at the house, other than the singing of the lament by the mother and girls and women of closely related households. During the night when the second grandson of the old man died I heard the mother going all through the village singing the lament, beautifully and sadly as if in real grief. The child was buried next day but I do not know where nor with what ritual. They made it plain that they considered it a strictly family affair and I respected their wishes. The family was genuinely distressed and reasonably so, for he was an exceptionally intelligent child and the only remaining grandson. Moreover, not long before the father had been taken away by soldiers. The mother seemed beside herself for several days, calling another child by her child's name. The old man wept, then apologized for his "weakness." They did not tell the father, for they feared he would make an effort to get back and so get into more trouble.

757 When the baby took ill the mother said it had a fever. I gave it a small dose of quinine and aspirin. She said she did not know of any other symptoms. But the next day they called in the shamaness and, as he lay on a pallet of straw by the fireplace, he showed unmistakable signs of dysentery. Two other children in the family had it at the same time, but recovered. When I learned they had dysentery, I gave the parents bismuth, but it is difficult to administer and they said the children would not take it. That night the baby developed meningitis and died.

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535 The length of time given to activities and their elaborateness in connection with the death and burial of an adult depended upon the wealth and extent of relationship in the family, as well as the time of year at which the death occurred. I was not in the village

764 when the man of fifty-odd died, but was told
535 they danced for him. A man of about the
same age died in Lo-ying, another Cowrie
Shell Miao village near Yang-niu-ts'un. For
him they danced two nights. A tripod was
set up before a house in Yang-niu-ts'un in
which lived a woman whose maiden name was
Lo and who had come from that village.

764 The first funeral I saw was that of the oldest
inhabitant of the village of Yang-chia-sai, a
woman of eighty-four. She was related to
practically everyone in the whole village and
had relatives in other villages, as well. More-
over, she was the only one of her generation
left in the village. Two nephews were with
the aviation corps of the army, stationed in
Kunming. She died on the twenty-third of the
first month. I knew nothing about it until I
heard the sound of drumming the next day
and saw before the house of nearly every
family in the village a tripod formed of carry-
ing poles or other poles of the same length,
tied together near the top. A wicker scoop
rested on top of them, in which was a spray
of thorn tied with rushes, a pair of chopsticks,
and two bowls, one containing a cooked green
vegetable and one cooked rice.

I followed the sound of the drum and found
in the house in which the old lady's widowed
daughter-in-law lived the following things:
In the central room, near the right side as
one faced the door and with its foot toward
the door, was a coffin, raised a little from the
floor. This was of the Chinese type and of
wood of the proper thickness. The lid of the
coffin was reversed. On it at the upper end
was the body of the little, old lady, dressed
in her best—new, high Chinese shoes, two
pair of new trousers, the short pleated skirt
worn by a bride and her attendants, the two
aprons, three blouses, the outer one of orange
silk, the overpiece, and her best turban with
embroidered scarf. On the right side of her
body at the waist was a large bunch of to-
bacco leaves. One of the local priests, who
in this case, however, was acting in his ca-
pacity as a nephew, was kneeling at the foot
of the coffin burning spirit money.⁶ This he
lighted in the flame of one of two red candles,

sign cut in it, used only for ritual purposes.

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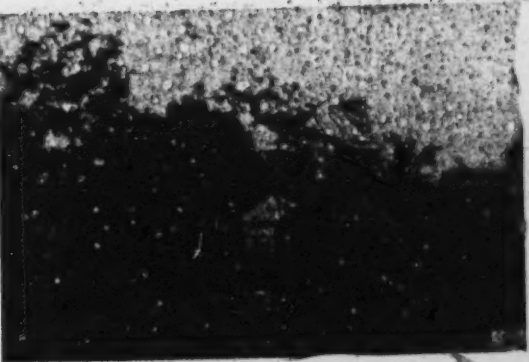
764 square measure of rice with incense sticks in it.

764 That night the young girls, even the tiny ones, of the village and those from other villages who had come to the funeral danced around the room in which the coffin stood. Gradually young men playing the *lu sheng* joined them until there were nine. The little girls soon dropped out and went home to bed. The drum and *lu sheng* were played together, occasionally the drum alone. Some of the beats were on the bone. The rhythm was sometimes steady as if for marching; sometimes with several quick beats (usually six), a rest, and then one; sometimes syncopated, with many beats first on the drum and then on the bone. The dancing was a bouncing with bending of the knees, first on one foot and then on the other. The *lu sheng* players also danced and set the rhythm for the girls, who stood very close side by side in groups moving exactly together. The women of our household dressed me in their tribal costume and told me to go, too. I found the steady beat easy to follow, but not the syncopation, and the girls constantly urged me to be more vigorous. My efforts were almost too much for the solemnity of the old man's son, who was one of the *lu sheng* players. This drum and *lu sheng* playing were repeated for the succeeding three nights from dusk until dawn. During the day some of the small boys played on these instruments. All the Cowrie Shell Miao seemed to be musical and able to play, sing, and dance.

764 During the day men wrote appropriate sentiments in black on white paper and pasted them over the red ones on door and window frames. Banners of checked cloth with similar sentiments on white paper pasted to them were presented by guests as they arrived and someone in the family set them up against the front of the house. As groups of relatives from other villages arrived gunpowder charges or firecrackers were set off. Women in the groups knelt beside the coffin and sang the wailing song. On the third day after her death the most important men and women of the village were invited to a feast. I was included. A pig which one group brought had been killed and the dishes were of fat pork cooked in various ways, dry and fresh bean curd,

4: Mickey E-6 (1940-1947) AES Miso AES.
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[For captions, see p. 91b.
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[91a]

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a. The *lu-sheng*. b. The *lu-sheng*, showing men dancing as they play the instrument. c. Old woman in ragged clothing. d. Two school boys before the shrine to the local deity at the south of the village. e. Woman winding bobbins from the ball in a tub of water, one of the priests is behind her. f. "Old Black" Miao, showing embroidery like that on the old woman's body at burial (see p. 56).

[91b]

- 291 pretty pleated skirts. Their upper garment, a very open-necked bodice, is ultra modern, but it must [834] be recorded that though married women expose their breasts unmarried girls never do so. Women 292 wear no head-dress. Indeed, a year or two after 302 marriage they wind their hair into a horn that makes the wearing of a hat impossible. This peculiar coiffure is a sign of motherhood, and it is a proud day when a woman can dress her hair in this manner. Her "horn is exalted". Unmarried girls wear their hair in two plaits, something after 301 the fashion of English schoolgirls. Young men, as well as young women, wear brass or copper ear-rings, and on gala occasions every one, man or 292 woman, has a beautiful embroidered gown. In general the dress is pleasing, even picturesque, and harmonises beautifully with the mountains on which they live. It is not unusual for a missionary to be presented with a gala gown. English friends are highly amused when they are told that such a gown was grown in a village garden. Like Joseph's coat it is of many colours. The cloth is woven from hemp cultivated in a nearby hamlet, the woollen texture is made from wool sheared from mountain sheep, the pretty colouring is obtained from plants and roots gathered on the hills—in a word it was grown in a village garden.
- [53] Everybody is fond of noise, dancing and music. 531 The musical instrument par excellence is the *ggeb* which is played by the young men, who are popular and admired according to their ability to blow it. A *ggeb* is made of bamboo pipes,

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sound, the lowest note, we believe, to which 534
mortal ears are sensible. The tunes they play
are very monotonous.

At the Heh Miao festivals, five players in a 535
row, with instruments of different sizes, wheel 796
round and round the man who plays the large
pipes with the drum. A row of five young
women go round with them, sometimes facing
them and moving backwards, sometimes behind
and following. To alter their position the
young women wheel outside of the circle, let
the pipers go round, and then wheel in again.
This they call dancing, but there is no real
dancing about it; it is merely pacing, yet it
seems to interest them, and they do it very
seriously. We think it must be reckoned bad
form for them to laugh or smile while thus
engaged, for we have seen the girls severely
exerting themselves to keep their faces straight,
when they evidently wanted at least to smile.
As for the pipers, it is no laughing or smiling 533
matter for them. They exert themselves so 796
much that their cheeks are swollen, their eyes
seem to stand out of their heads, and the
perspiration streams down their red faces.
We have seen thirty or forty of these groups
of ten, circling round on one plot of ground,
hemmed in by hundreds of spectators. The

[182 cont.]

796 friends and relatives, and the younger generations pay respects to
574 their elders (The New Year gifts for the children vary from ten to twenty cents.) When they exchange visits and greetings they [431] bring with them a couple of home-made tz'u pa (each about 1 sheng of rice), candies and refreshments as gifts. The host and hostesses must entertain the visitors with tea and wine. The tenant farmers also present similar New Year gifts to their landlords, who in return would give them pieces of cloth or other household articles. As a rule such New Year greetings do not extend beyond the twelfth day though intimate relatives may offer theirs until the fifteenth. If a relative who has kept up these New Year visits throughout the past years fails to turn up, the family will be greatly offended. The Miao-I take the New Year greetings very seriously, and hence they should not be neglected.

796 The Hua Miao and the Ch'ing Miao in the hsien district
635 have a custom of flower dance. There is a fixed location for the dancing ground, called the "flower bed." The dates for flower dances are set according to schedules in various places, and are generally between the fourth and the fifteenth day of the first month. On this occasion visitors gather like clouds in great jubilation, and it is indeed the most important festival of the Hua Miao and the Ch'ing Miao throughout the year.

796 The fifteenth day of the first month is the "Small New Year" with the Hua Miao and the Ch'ing Miao. That evening they put in front of the doorway a small table, on which are placed as sacrificial offerings a bowl of rice, a piece of meat and a cup of rice wine. Burning incense and lighting candles, they would kneel down and pray: "We pray to the Buddha tonight to guide us this year smoothly to wealth and prosperity." After the prayer, the old and young, except the womenfolk, worship in turn. Then they sit down together for a feast in the hall. After dinner they have fun for the rest of the evening. The Chung-chia celebrate the "Small New Year" on the thirtieth day of the first month. Besides other delicacies at the table, [262] every family makes tz'u-pa balls fried in oil, known as "eating [769] oil balls." They make sacrifices to their ancestors in great piety.

[183 cont.]

796 consider this day as the birthday of the cow-king, and so all the
[231] cows in the field have a day of rest.

The Fifth Month. The fifth day of this month is the Tuan-yang festival, also known locally as "Tuan-wu." The Miao-I families in the hsien district would steam glutinous rice on the fourth day and mash it into tz'u-pa the next morning. Every
[262] member of the family would receive a few pieces and these are eaten with maple sugar and crushed bean paste in the place of meals for that day. But it is [184] not a holiday and they still work as usual in the fields. Recently many Miao-I imitate the Chinese by hanging rush and artemisia leaves at the door, and at
[262] noon time they drink realgar wine and eat glutinous rice dumplings [wrapped in bamboo leaves] and noodles instead of rice.

After the transplantation of rice-plants in the fourth and
[243] fifth months and at the time of their flowering (called locally "yang flowers") in the seventh and eighth months, the Hua
● [535] Miao and the Ch'ing Miao both have a dancing-festival as festive as the New Year flower dance.

The Sixth Month. The temples of the local gods in all the Chinese and Miao-I villages in the district are scenes of great celebration on the sixth day of this month. The Miao-I build
[346] their local temples outside the village gate, and on this day they would hold processions in honor of the Earth God. The day before, the village head prepared in advance a big pig and many varieties of meats and vegetables. On the sixth day all the items of sacrifice are carried to the village gate and deposited there in front of the Earth God temple. After setting off the firecrackers, every family takes turns to perform a ritual before the temple. After the sacrifice the pork is divided up among the families, the quantity being designated by each family to be paid for in grain after the autumn harvest. The remainder of the pork together with the other meats and vegetables are cooked together on the spot in a huge cauldron and eaten by all the people present. After feasting each family brings home a small quantity of pork, from which a piece is cut off for sacrifice on the border of one's field. A string of paper money is also stuck there as a token to

[195 cont.]

517 According to our investigations the Miao-I at An-shun have many
 535 kinds of recreation, of which the most important are the flower
 ● dance, the market dance, the moon dance, the "kan-piao,"
 singing and playing musical instruments. These are discussed
 separately as follows.

595 (I) The Flower Dance. The Hua Miao and the Ch'ing Miao
 527 in the An-shun area hold flower dances every year. This is an
 important collective recreation of the Miao during the farming
 holidays. We have asked the Miao people about the purpose of
 the flower dance. Their answer is that when Lord Hsüan of the
 Wei state in the Chou Dynasty built a new terrace to flirt with
 the woman of Ch'i, he inaugurated the flower dance for the Miao.
 The method of the flower dance is said to have been created by
 Yang-lu (considered the original ancestor of the Hua Miao). A
 local proverb has it that "if the Miao do not flower-dance, the
 grains will not sprout." The superstition that the flower dance
 can bring about a prosperous harvest is the result of a low-
 cultured tradition. All the Miao people believe in it whole-
 heartedly today as they did of old.

Among the Hua Miao and the Ch'ing Miao, the time of
 the flower dance is generally in the first month of the lunar year,
 the dates varying slightly with different flower slopes (that is, the
 places where they dance), and depending upon the time when
 such places were first established. But once fixed, they cannot
 be changed later. According to our investigation, the locations
 for the dance are usually the most populated areas. There are
 altogether seven dancing slopes within the An-shun area, five for
 the Hua Miao and two for the Ch'ing Miao. The locations and
 the dates are listed below in the following table:

[196]

<u>Locations</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Tribes</u>
East Gate Hamlet outside	First month:	Hua Miao
East Gate	7th, 8th, 9th	
Upper Village outside	First month: 10th,	Ch'ing Miao
South Gate	11th, 12th, 13th	

[196 cont.]

<u>Locations</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Tribes</u>
527 Flower Dance Hill	First month,	Hua Miao
535 Outside North Gate	4th, 5th, 6th	
[?] -chou in the Third District	First month: 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th	Ch'ing Miao
Chiang-chia-Ma-lung in the Fourth District	First month: 6th	Hua Miao
Ping-chai in the Fourth District	First month: 8th	Hua Miao
Chung-yü-shan in the Fourth District	First month: 10th	Hua Miao

Among the above locations the dancing areas at the Flower Dance Hill belonging to the Hua Miao and the Upper Village belonging to the Ch'ing Miao are the largest. The dates set for such occasions are not subject to change, wind or rain notwithstanding. On the day of the dance all the community, without regard to wealth, age or sex, go to the appointed place in groups. The festivity of the occasion can well be imagined. The following is a detailed description of the flower dance.

A. The Method of the Flower Dance. 1) The Flower Slope and the Flower Tree. When the Miao perform the flower dance they use the flower slope and the flower tree. The flower slope is the place where they dance, also called the "Hua-ch'ang" [flower yard], located on a hill in the neighborhood of a village, or half-way up a hill, or on level ground. The owner of the land where the dance takes place is known as the "flower host," generally a very influential person of the area. The land chosen for the flower slope has a quality of permanency. Before the flower dance is held, the slope is decorated with a tree of about a dozen feet in height, known as the "flower tree." One day before the event the flower host, blowing a trumpet, would welcome the tree to the flower slope, preferably a tree with green branches and leaves on the top. It is best when the tree is stolen from

[196 cont.]

535 somebody else's land and duly cursed by him. The flower trees in
 527 the various flower slopes are changed either once a year, or [197]
 842 once every few years, depending upon whether some family
 would receive the tree after the dance. If a childless couple
 in the Miao village near the flower slope should give a feast for
 the guests to receive the tree into their home, the host would be
 happy to have the tree removed. The following year a new
 flower tree would be found for the slope. At the same time
 the family receiving the tree would make its timber into a bed.
 When the childless couple sleep in this bed they would become
 fertile and produce a son.

535 2) Participants. When a certain area holds a flower dance,
 527 men and women, old and young, from all the villages nearby
 would come in bands. Young men and women would carry
 bundles on their backs, and on approaching the flower slope the
 men would open them and change into new clothes and nailed
 boots, with short flutes dangling around the waist, and leather
 or wooden bags hanging behind. As headgear they use pheasant
 [301] feathers adorned with strips of colored cloth streaming in the air.
 They carry in their hands five-pipe or six-pipe bamboo-wind
 instruments [lu-sheng]. The women also change into new clothes,
 [292] new skirts and jackets of bright patterns. The Chinese merchants
 of the area would establish stalls to sell candies, fruits and toys.
 Arriving at the flower slope the men would surround the flower
 tree in a circle, dancing as they move along and playing the
 bamboo-wind instruments. Listening to the music, the dancers
 would make noise by stamping their nailed shoes on the ground
 as they dance along in a rhythmic din. After circling a few
 times, the paired dancers fall into line, making the steps now
 left, now right, and now making a break as they follow the
 cadence of the music. First the men play bamboo wind instru-
 ments and later the women play mouth organs. The crowd dances
 around the tree a few times or as many as a dozen times. Out-
 side the slope still others would play clarinets [so-na, a type of
 clarinet], bamboo wind instruments, and flutes, forming bands by
 themselves. The women often form groups of their own. Some

[197 cont.]

527 would just cluster around and watch, while others would disperse
535 to sing and joke and play mouth organs. The noises on the
slope soon become confused as the festivity wears on. After
the dance the old and the middle-aged would form groups to
help themselves with refreshments while the young men and
women would scatter to the high cliffs and wilderness to sing and
talk, such laxity being altogether permissible on this day.

527 B. The Purposes of the Flower Dance. 1) The Belief in
535 a Prosperous Harvest. The Miao have no other pursuits besides
241 agriculture, and in case of famine there are no means to main-
tain livelihood. So during the first month when there is a respite
between farm activities they hold the flower dance to pray for
a bountiful year with an adequate rainfall to bring about a rich
harvest in all the grain. This superstitious belief is not only
indulged in by the Miao, but shared by the local Chinese as well.

[648] Therefore, in case that the Miao themselves cannot maintain
order at the dancing slope, the Chinese [198] are always ready
to offer help. Sometimes the Chinese are even willing to put up
the money for the flower slope and welcome the Miao to the
dance as a prosperous harvest benefits all the people concerned.

527 2) The Belief in the Acquisition of a son. The Miao of
535 the area believe firmly that the flower dance facilitates child-
842 birth. So at the dance one often sees couples wearing unem-
broidered jackets with blankets on their back for, it is said, after
the flower dance the conception of a child is most likely. There
are also couples who after being childless for a long time, wel-
come the flower tree to their house and give feasts at great ex-
pense to entertain visitors. When the tree arrives at the gaily
decorated house, it is received to the accompaniment of fire-
crackers and instrumental music from the lu-sheng and so-na.
The hosts kneels down to welcome the tree and blesses it with
many lucky words in anticipation of a son. This is another
reason why the Hua Miao perform the flower dance.

527 3) The Selection of a Mate. Many Miao choose their
535 partners in life at the flower dance, and many parents follow
584 their sons and daughters to the scene to observe whether the
ones selected are satisfactory. After the event they would ask a

[198 cont.]

535 go-between to arrange the match. Therefore, young men and
 527 women everywhere try to make as many new clothes as possible
 584 to be worn on this occasion. The dancers sometimes change
 their clothes a few times a day. In short, the custom of the
 flower dance has prevailed for a long time. Some dance with
 the hope of acquiring children while others, among the illusive
 shadows and to the tune of scintillating music, look secretly but
 intently for his or her future mate. For the unmarried men and
 women the purpose of the flower dance is to seek a partner in
 life.

535 (II) The Market Dance. The market dance is also an im-
 527 portant annual event with the Hua Miao and the Ch'ing Miao in
 443 this area. The dance is similar to the flower dance, except that
 it does not require a flower tree and that it has no fixed date
 and place. It is held generally after the transplantation of
 young rice-plants in the fourth or fifth month, or after the
 ripening of the crop in the seventh or eighth month. It is held
 [202] at the market fair, but the announcement is made at a previous
 fair by the host (or promoter, who is generally a Chinese) with
 two men, one beating a gong, and the other balancing a bamboo
 pole on his shoulder, on which is tied a belt with flower designs.
 This belt is presented as a souvenir by the girl to the boy when
 they talk love at the dance. When the two men circle around
 the fair once the crowd would know that the next one would be a
 market dance. On that occasion bands of men and women from
 all parts would come with new clothes as for the flower dance,
 men playing so-na and lu-sheng, and talking all the way. Ar-
 riving at the fair they would perch on the high mounds or stay in
 the low open ground outside the market place, playing musical
 instruments and singing songs. Young men and women take this
 opportunity to meet new friends or [199] renew old acquaintances.
 [243] The old people believe that the market dance in the fourth month,
 when the buckwheat and other grains flower, can encourage the
 yielding of more crops, and the market dance in the seventh
 month can bring about firmer and larger seeds. The market dance
 is known proverbially as the "grain dance," a name which clearly
 reveals its superstitious origin.

[199 cont.]

535 (III) The Moon Dance. The moon dance in the fourth month
832 is the nocturnal meeting of the Miao-I in the An-shun area. According to Miao-I customs, whenever the moon and the stars are bright, young men and women may go out at this period of the year in groups of a few persons or a dozen or more each to some quiet, lonely spots in the vicinity of the village to play music and dance. The steps for the dance are the same as those for the flower dance. Young girls who are attracted by the music are not prevented by parents from running out to watch the dance. A man's glory is to extract a smile from a girl, and when her parents are not taking notice he may take her to the woods to whisper to her honeyed words of love. Therefore, the moon dance is an occasion for love-making by the Miao-I youths.

517 (IV) The "Kan-piao." The moon dance described above
832 provides night recreations and scenes of love serenades for the Miao-I. The "kan-piao" is another form of recreation that gives men and women a chance to fall in love, but it may be pursued during night or day. The "kan-piao" is also known by various names such as "ta-ma-lan," "yao-ma-lang," "ta-piao," and "ling-piao." To perform it, the man would first whistle [534] by means of some leaves in the mouth or play the flute as a signal to entice the lover to some shaded nook to exchange lovers' vows. An ideal place for "kan-piao" is a deep forest out of reach of human footsteps. In former times, in isolated places outside the village, there were erected little sheds called "flower chambers" for the rendezvous of young men and women. These flower chambers, however, are now nine out of ten destroyed. Ordinarily, when they carry on "kan-piao," the man would take the girl home, otherwise he would be accused of kidnapping. If a girl takes a man home, her parents would [574] not only leave them alone, but are also obliged to kill a chicken and provide wine in order to show the graciousness of their daughter in receiving guests. The custom of "kan-piao" is most popular with the Chung-chia in the An-shun district. They have comparatively fewer forms of recreation than the Hua Miao, and the young people among them often indulge in "kan-piao" as a [579] happy pastime. Often in "kan-piao" a man gets into a fight

[168 cont.]

776 tormenting human beings, they have no fear at all of these bad spirits, contrary to what we have seen in the "Thai" and especially in the "Man." Also the "Thai" and the "Man" consider the "Méo" as men of a special species.

[169] The "Méo" think that men have three souls, "pli,"
774 that reincarnate themselves in the bodies of pregnant women. (See
775 note on page 178.)

779 They have the priest-sorcerers who preside at the ceremonies and have the power of communicating with the spirits. These priests are illiterate and receive no initiation. The tribal traditions, the curtailed rites, and the few formulas of exorcism or of incantation are orally transmitted. The office is usually hereditary.

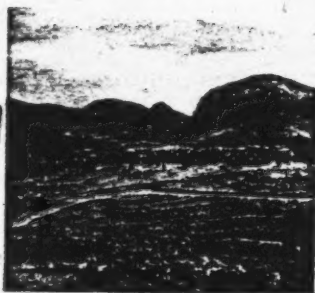
The "Méo" celebrate a great many festivals, which are so
796 many occasions for having a spree. At the beginning of the year, the spirits of heaven, of the earth, and of the hearth are especially feted, as well as the ancestors. At planting time, sacrifices are made to the spirit of the mountains, protector of the crops. After the harvest, further sacrifices to the spirit of the mountains and to the ancestors. The third day of the fifth month, a special celebration at the time of the harvesting of medicinal herbs. Besides these ceremonies on fixed dates, the "Méo" carefully celebrate the anniversaries of births and of other happy events. All these festivals consist of feasting and drinking intermingled with songs and dances. The "Méo"
[157] nature is carefree and very gay; he loves music and dancing. The
[83] songs, in "Méo" dialect, are always obscene and even erotic. The
[53] dance, performed only by the men, is most often done while playing
[535] the "sen." The player keeps his knees bent and the upper part of his body leaning forward. He jumps from one foot to the other, either while turning about or going forward or backward, but without ceasing his playing. (Photo 155, Plate 40.)

524 The "Méo" children very often play the game of the revolving seesaw, which they probably got from the Chinese. A solid post, deeply planted in the earth, terminates at its upper end in a central peg, on which is balanced a very big pole, which has for this purpose a hole through its center. This pole is movable horizontally about the axis formed by the central peg described above. It is also movable

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154. The "marriage fair"
of the "Méo" of Pha-Long.



155. The Dance of the "Méo"
"sen" Player.

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157.

Groups of Young Women of Various
"Méo" Tribes of the Pha-Long Region,
Come to the Marriage Fair.

000 from their necklaces. They like dancing, songs and music. Their
 533 instruments are the flageolet and flute with organ pipes or sen. The
 534 latter is composed of a stout tube ending in a metal mouthpiece, in
 535 the middle of which are inserted six organ pipes of varying length,
 pierced with holes at their base. To play this instrument one blows
 into the mouthpiece while holding the large tube in both hands at
 arm's length, at the same time closing certain of the holes on the
 organ pipes with the fingers. Thus nasal sounds resembling those of a
 bad accordion are obtained. This music is always accompanied by
 a somewhat grotesque dance in which the musician himself engages.
 Holding the instrument at arm's length in a very inconvenient way,
 he leans his body forward from the hips and, skimming over the
 ground with his feet, he starts hopping from one foot to the other,
 while turning about to the right or to the left. This heavy and grace-
 less exercise reminds one of the dance of a bear at a fair. The Meo
 also play a small jew's-harp which is made up of a thin strip of brass
 which vibrates against the teeth. Women neither dance nor play
 musical instruments, but love to sing in shrill voices like a small
 girl, while working in the fields.

[562]
 273 We shall see farther on that all the ceremonies are accompanie
 by feasts lasting several days. In addition in the high region the
 Meo /142/ have the reputation of being the mountaineers most in-
 clined to drunkenness. Happily for the future of their race, the
 altitude at which they live and the arduous work to which they devote
 themselves are elements which combat the dangers of alcoholism.

844 Customs relative to childbirth are not remarkable. No sign
 851 marks the house of a woman in confinement. A woman in labor seats
 848 herself on a tabouret to give birth to her infant, assisted by her mother
 or midwife. If the new-born child is a boy, the placenta is buried in
 front of the main doorway, and if it is a girl, under the kitchen hearth.
 As among the Tho, bastards are given a very poor reception. If an
 attempt to bring about an abortion has not been successful, the mother
 is forced to leave her infant to die of hunger.

584 Marriage preliminaries are shorter and less complicated than
 among the Tho. When a young man desires to wed a young woman,
 he tells his father about it, and he sends two of his men friends,
 selected from among older and respectable persons, carrying sticks
 of incense, in order to make the proposal. The sweet-smelling sticks
 are stuck into the soil and lighted in front of the doorway of the young
 woman's parents. If the master of the house offers a drink of alcohol

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Miao AE5

/83 cont. /

A may happen that a father gives his child a simple tube flute
 M /Stabflöte/ or a whistle. Otherwise there is no art in the life
 857 of the children which is not also practiced by the adults. I
 [534] did not find nursery rhymes or fairy tales; /84/ singing, how-
 [538] ever, plays a great role in the life of the Meau children, while
 among the Akha instead of this it is dancing (see the chapter,
 "Art." section on "Dancing").

M The Meau mother sings her baby to sleep and in doing so
 533 tells it about the work in the fields; the father or the older
 brothers, however, sing different songs to the boys, especially
 M the old love songs. Not until they are about fourteen years old
 [868] do they learn the dances, which are closely tied in with the
 [535] cult (see the chapter, "Art." section on "Dancing").

A It is otherwise among the Akha, among whom dancing
 535 plays an important role even at the earliest age. I repeatedly
 857 saw three-year-old girls trying to imitate the dances of the
 868 adults. As soon as the children are to the slightest degree physi-
 cally able to do it, they dance with devotion and persistence and
 try to learn all the details of the dances. The adults do not
 support them in this endeavor; they do not teach them and
 do not correct their mistakes; instead, the older children guide
 the younger ones and make them aware of their mistakes. The
 children's marked talent for imitation is very helpful in this.

A Plastic representations are unknown to the Meau (see the
 M chapter, "Art." section on "Painting, Sculpture, Ornamenta-
 532 tion"). It is therefore amazing that the children, though they
 never see products of this form of art activity, are nevertheless
 able to make human and animal figures out of clay (Ill. 65).²
 The same is true of the Akha children who do not see any
 sculpture except the wooden figures standing before the entrances
 to the villages (see the chapter, "Religion and Magic," the
 section on "Deities and Spirits").

² [see cat 116, p471 - ANALYST]

/145 cont./

534 — For the manufacturing process, the length of the pipes, which, along with the diameter, determines the pitch, is always chosen so that their tone is somewhat lower than the one actually aimed for; finally the instrument is tuned by appropriately shortening the tubes. Each pipe is provided with a /Figs. 24-27 appear here/ blow hole that leads into the body of the mouth organ, and with a keyhole that is stopped with a finger. The tone is produced by stopping the keyhole and blowing into the pipe. In addition the vibration parts for the mouth organ are so constructed that the same tone is produced by blowing air in or by sucking it out. Not until the end of the process is the silver mouthpiece put on. The construction of this instrument makes it possible to breathe while playing. Thus, during the sacral dances one can play uninterruptedly. This is very important since the players always dance and play at the same time. The actual use of the instrument is best shown by the drawings and photographs. While the intervals between the individual pipe tones are fixed, the absolute pitch of the basic flute is left to the taste of the manufacturer; it also depends on the size of the instrument. Thus the mouth organs differ considerably from one another in basic pitch, but agree melodically. The use of the pitch pipe is not customary.

[533] /146/ Another instrument of the Meau, which is especially popular among lovers and is played by both sexes, is the jew's-harp (Fig. 27). It consists of a sheet of brass or bronze with a vibrating tongue in the middle. The jew's-harp is placed against the teeth and made to vibrate with the right thumb; the oral cavity acts as the sounding board (Ill. 77). ²/₁

Furthermore, there are two kinds of flute. The simple rod flute (Ill. 76) consists of a wooden or bamboo body and has six finger holes on the upper side and one on the under side tuned in major. /Figs. 28-29 appear here./ The hole on the under side is sometimes stopped. The simple construction of the flute is shown in the drawings (Fig. 24 and Fig. 25). Both sexes play this flute as well as the one described below.

[114] Lajonquière (1), too, mentions flutes and mouth organs. He

1. II. p. 311.

²/₁ [see cat 116, p 574 - ANALYST]

AKha A04
Miao AE5

/149 cont. /

c) Dancing

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In the cult of the Meau, dancing plays an important role, as it does among the Akha, Lahu, and Lisu.

The Akha, like the Meau, know only one men's dance; which Abadie (1) as well as Lajonquière (2) confirm for the

1. Page 169.

2. II. p. 311.

Meau, while women's dances are not known at all among the Meau. The dance consists of quick turns and twists of the body; from time to time the dancer goes into a squatting position and then makes great leaps. Without paying any attention to the number of dancers present, each one moves independently while playing on his mouth organ, whose construction, as /150/ has been described, permits playing without pause. I never witnessed a dance where the mouth organ was not played.

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The dance of the Meau is purely a cult dance, and therefore the use of the sacral mouth-organ calls for the dance movements, and the latter, in turn, require the musical accompaniment. As was stated in the chapter, "Life in the Community," section on "Old Age and Death," Lajonquière (1) asserts that in

1. II. p. 318.

some areas the coffin is carried to the grave in a kind of dance step. This would be the only occasion on which several Meau dancing at the same time execute the same dance movement. Furthermore the same author (2) states: The Meau dance when

2. II. p. 312.

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they are in a good mood, for instance, on market days, when they customarily imbibe heartily. They also dance in connection with certain ceremonies, for instance, a burial... I was unable to confirm the first assertion; on the other hand,

AKha A04
Miao AES

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I did become acquainted with the dance of the Meau as a definite cult dance which is performed in connection with the festivals for the dead and burials in order to please the soul of the deceased, and furthermore there is dancing during the New Year's festival in order to please the ancestors. Therefore I believe that a dance of the Meau on market days cannot be customary, since, as was pointed out, dancing is connected with the use of the sacral musical instruments, which, of course, are not used on market days.

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The ceremonial dance of the Akha men is more moderate than that of the Meau. The Akha do not go into a squatting position, but alternately execute slight turns toward either side with the upper body and from time to time insert little jumps (Ill. 23).¹ Thus their dance is by no means wild, like, say, the dance of primitives, for example, but is more reminiscent of our old round dances.

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Aside from this dance related to the cult activities, the dance also plays an important role among the Akha simply as an expression of the joy of life (see the chapter, "Life in the Community," section on "Sexual Development"). It offers the boys a splendid opportunity to put themselves in a good light before the girls and to display the nimbleness of their limbs.

The women's dance of the Akha -- a phenomenon unknown to the Meau -- consists of several figures and is likewise a /151/ round dance. The girls start in single file, grasp one another by the shoulders, and perform the steps of their round dance to the accompaniment of their songs. It is an obvious expression of love of life and high spirits when at the end each girl takes the leg of the girl in front in her right hand so that all of them are now hopping on one leg in a circle (Ill. 24).² These round dances of the girls have nothing to do with the cult of the Akha; they, like the non-cult dances of the boys, go with love life. The chief of the village of Kajäka remarked: "Our girls' dances are done only to entertain the young folk."

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The dancing takes place on special dancing places in the vicinity of the villages and preferably on moonlit nights. Only the young people take part in these dances, no married women of any age and young husbands only as exceptions among both

1 [see cat. 116, p 131 - ANALYST]
2 [" " " , p 132 - "]

Akha A04

Miao AE5

/151 cont.-/

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the Akha and Meau. Old people of either sex do not dance under any circumstances, whether or not they are now widowed or unmarried. I have already discussed the participation of children at the dance entertainments in the sections, "Art in the Life of the Children" and "Sexual Development," in the chapter, "Life in the Community." Masks and masked dances are unfamiliar to both peoples.

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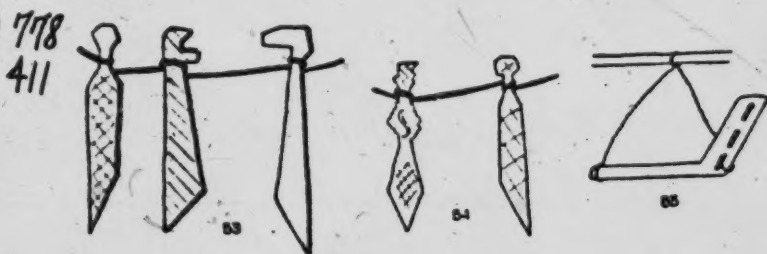
Although the Akha are strictly endogamous, it is said, as my interpreter maintained, that on rare occasions they do not object to the participation of guests in their dances. I wanted to verify this statement, however, and suggested to my wife that she make an attempt to dance with the Akha women when the opportunity arose. On one of the following evenings my wife stepped into the circle of dancers. At first no one wanted to take her hand; a few even fled into the forest. Then my wife promptly seized by the hands two of the women taking flight, pulled them back to the dancing place, and soon all had lost their shyness before her, and even those who had fled returned. Two of the older girls then took my wife into the circle and taught her the dance steps. This visibly broke the ice. They found the khaki trousers and blouse of my wife abominable, but my wife had to confess that she had no festive garb. Nothing could be simpler! They gladly wanted to help her out with their clothing. Of course these garments of the Akha, among whom my wife looked like a giantess, did not fit at all. To be sure, /152/ nothing could be done, but the girls at least decked out my wife with ornaments and chains of beads made of dried fruits, and they were not satisfied until she was adorned with a great number of these chains, and then they all laughingly began to dance. All this had taken place without any ill-humor at all, and from this day on the Akha women, who before that had been very distrustful, lost all their shyness before us, which greatly facilitated our investigations.

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To be sure, among the Akha, too, there may be a dance to honor someone, or the festively adorned dancers may invite him to accompany them to the dancing place, but even with all the good understanding we had not counted on belonging to this select group. One evening, however, it was about nine o'clock and we were already in our beds in the tent, when shots

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- 535 - The Meau do not have any processions, purification procedures, or penances, but cultic dancing is known, as has already been described in detail. As will be recalled, the dance is purely sacral among the Meau, is performed only by men, and is always accompanied by the playing of mouth organs. The Meau women therefore do not dance at all; since they do not perform any cultic dances. In accordance with this attitude toward dancing, the Meau do not know any borrowing or loaning of dances.



Figs. 53-55. Spirit-swords of the Meau.

- [531] Figs. 53-55. Spirit-swords carved out of wood, with simple linear designs made with charcoal, 1/18 nat. size. Fig. 55. Spirit-sword made of bronze, 1/20 nat. size.

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[881] Unknown, too, are any religious societies or clubs, such as, say, a joining together of the young people at the time of initiation, since nothing like this is known, and, as has been said, no sacrifices are offered at the onset of puberty.

[782] The concept of the totem is likewise unknown to the Meau; 532 no idols are erected and there are no plastic representations of gods or ancestors. Although the everyday life of the Meau 778 reveals an intimate association with their ancestors and spirits, [779] they limit themselves to erecting places of worship for them, but not images.

/VII cont./

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Ills. 75-77. Musical instruments.

Ill. 75. The mouth organ of the Meau, which differs in size and construction from the instruments of the other mountain peoples of Farther India (cf. Ill. 25). The instrument is carefully carved out of wood and mounted with silver rings. The inserted flutes are made of bamboo. As among the Akha, the instrument is played exclusively by men and usually simultaneously with dancing. The mouth organ is of greatest significance for the Meau as a sacral musical instrument.

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Ill. 76. Simple rod-flute of the Meau, made of bamboo, with one blow hole and six finger holes on the upper side and one finger hole on the under side. The latter is kept shut during the playing.

Ill. 77. Jew's-harp. The instrument consists of a brass or bronze plate, the center of which is cut out to form a tongue. The jew's-harp is placed against the teeth and made to vibrate with the thumb of the right hand; the oral cavity forms the sounding board. A change in the size of the oral cavity produces a change of pitch.

Ills. 78-80 and 91-96. Means of subsistence.

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Ill. 78. Flintlock gun, the chief weapon in war and for hunting, which the Meau make themselves, as well as the black gunpowder. The gun does not have a butt like the European gun, but merely a pistol stock. Lead or iron bullets are used. Although accuracy and penetrating power are slight, measured by European weapons, the Meau kill even big game with their guns.

Ill. 79. Crossbow. Next to the flintlock guns, the crossbow is the most important weapon of the Meau. Nevertheless, it is of less importance than among the Akha, who have almost no guns, and is usually used only for hunting birds and small game. With poisoned arrows, however, even large game and pachyderms are killed.

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Ill. 80. As passionate hunters, the Meau are masters at setting traps. The illustration shows a hunter who is setting a snare to catch wild birds. As soon as the bird touches the trigger stick, the noose jerks upward and the booty is caught in it.